



"Keeping Our Shores Safe"

THE LIGHTHOUSE

Edition #2– March 2021

Veterans of Foreign Wars

California District 10

Post and Auxiliary

Newsletter



COMMANDER & PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As we put this newsletter together we are hopeful that some of the restrictions related to the COVID pandemic will be lifted shortly and that we may be able to resume, in some shape or form, some of our normal activities. May, is typically a busy month with Poppy Drives, Armed Forces Day and Memorial Day fast approaching.

In this edition we will share some of the ideas submitted to resume some of our activities in a safe way.

Thanks to everyone who sent in content for this edition of the Lighthouse. Please continue to share information about your upcoming events or memories of past ones or other items of interest. Submit your articles and pictures via email to Coachsteiny@msn.com with the subject line "Lighthouse" and your Post or Auxiliary number by the 15th of each month.

Mark Steinberg, Commander

Helen Steinberg, President

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY/PATRIOT'S PEN

The National winners of the Voice of Democracy essay contest will be announced on April 1 at 7pm CDT on the VFW Facebook page. ([2](#)) [Veterans of Foreign Wars VFW | Facebook](#).

As we reported in last month's edition Clare Kane sponsored by Post 10789 Brentwood will be representing California in the VOD competition. You can listen to Clare's essay and the essays of the other State winners at [The Veterans of Foreign Wars \(VFW\)](#).

We also expect the results of the Patriot's Pen competition to be announced. Christian Woo sponsored by Post 8063 Lafayette will be representing California in that contest.

Please join us in cheering them on!

PATRIOTIC ART CONTEST

There is still time, albeit short, to submit entries for the Auxiliary Patriotic Art Contest. The first-place winner from each state competes for national awards totaling \$31,500. Deadline to get entries to one of our Auxiliaries is March 31, 2021. If your post doesn't have an Auxiliary please contact Mark Steinberg and he will provide you with contact details.

The contest is for 9-12 graders and submissions can be 2 or 3 dimensional art pieces in a variety of mediums. Full contest rules can be found at [Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest - VFW Auxiliary](#).

STAND DOWN ON THE DELTA



Planning for the Stand Down on the Delta is underway! The Stand Down will be held September 10-13 at the Antioch Fairgrounds. Planning is a little more complicated this year as the event organizers, Delta Veterans Group (DVG), are having to prepare for a variety of options based on possible COVID restrictions at the time. DVG is determined that the event will proceed in some shape or form. Please consider supporting the event through donations or time. Checks can be mailed to Delta Veterans Group c/o Stand Down on the Delta, 815 Fulton Shipyard Rd., Antioch CA 94509.

USS OAKLAND COMMISSIONING

The USS Oakland, a Littoral Combat Ship, will be commissioned on April 17, 2021 at Howard Terminal near Jack London square in Oakland. Information about becoming a donor can be found at [USS Oakland Commissioning](#)

POSTS/AUXILIARIES IN ACTION

On Feb. 11th, Roger Schmidt, Commander VFW Post 6298, Pleasanton, along with Dale Bowman, Commander, American Legion post 237, Pleasanton, delivered **Valentine's cards** to 5 local senior homes to be distributed to veterans in their care. The cards were made by students at Fredrickson Elementary school, Dublin CA who also thanked the Veterans for their service.

MEMORIAL DAY & POPPY DRIVE SUGGESTIONS

Here are a few of the suggestions we received to make our May activities a success while staying healthy and in compliance with any restrictions in place.

- 1) Have a plan A, plan B and maybe a plan C so that you can adjust quickly given any changes in restrictions
- 2) Memorial Day
 - Work closely with your city on any plans for gatherings to ensure that they are comfortable with the safety measures you are putting in place
 - Consider spacing of participants—by placing of chairs, chalking circles on the ground, etc.
 - When advertising event, make it clear that masks must be worn and social distancing maintained
- 1) When doing Poppy Drives
 - Use a plastic screen with a hole in it to create a barrier, similar to those cashiers in stores have, between those collecting money and the public
 - Wash hands well after counting money
 - Set up your collection boxes to minimize contact
 - Have hand sanitizer available for use
 - Plan ahead and be creative on where you hold poppy drives. Many of our usual locations are still not accepting third parties on their properties.

There is still a shortage of poppies so if you need some or have extras please contact Mark Steinberg so that we can make arrangements for exchanges.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



We were honored to be able to present certificates of recognition to two WWII Veterans this month.

The first was **Ray Henderson** of Post 1525 who was celebrating his 92nd birthday. Ray served in the Merchant Marines in WWII at the ripe old age of 15! He joined the Army aged 18 and

went on to serve in Korea and Vietnam. Ray is former Commander of American Legion District 2 (San Francisco). VFW members from several District 10 posts participated in a drive by to wish him a Happy Birthday.



The second was to Robert "Bob" Hoyer who was celebrating his 100th birthday. Bob was the first Mayor of the City of Clayton and served in the Philippines during World War II.

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

On March 24th, Post 6298 Pleasanton will celebrate **75 years** of supporting Veterans. Congratulations to the Post for your continued service!

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA EDUCATIONAL TRAILER



The Wreaths Across America (WAA) Educational Trailer will be visiting District 10 in May (tentative May 11-13). It will be located at the Concord Public Library in the Civic Center. COVID precautionary protocols will be followed.

The trailer will continue the mission of WAA to Remember, Honor and Teach. It will be staffed by DAR and VFW/Auxiliary members. If you are interested in helping, please contact Commander Mark Steinberg.

In addition to general education about Wreaths Across America this visit will specifically promote the WAA events at Union Cemetery Brentwood, Memory Gardens Cemetery Concord, Lafayette Cemetery, and Alamo and Dublin Pioneer Cemeteries.



DISTRICT 10 FOOD DRIVE

A big thank you to everyone (below) that has participated in the District Food Drive so far with special recognition to Auxiliary 6435 Antioch for their generosity.

6435 Antioch Auxiliary, 1525 Concord Auxiliary, 1525 Concord, 1898 Pittsburg, 8063 Lafayette, 10789 Brentwood, 2727 Oakland.

If you haven't yet donated you can still donate goods or money to your local food bank. Don't forget to complete a report to Department for any donations you make!

CASTRO VALLEY VETERANS MEMORIAL EXPANSION PROJECT



In the first decade of the new century, members of VFW Post 9601 Castro Valley realized that not only was there not a place to Honor the servicemembers returning from Middle Eastern conflicts, but nowhere to Honor any Veteran in the area. The idea of a Castro

Valley Veterans Memorial (CVVM) was born. The original Memorial was dedicated on Veterans Day 2012 and was so popular that it quickly became apparent that the Memorial needed to be expanded.

After more years of fundraising and planning, construction began on the expansion adding 5 large granite stones and additional pavers giving space to honor service members well into the future. The project was rededicated on Veterans Day 2020.

The memorial now honors and remembers Castro Valley residents KIA, each Branch of Service, families of the lost, Veterans, and Medal of Honor, Bronze and Silver Star and Purple Heart recipients.

Visit [Castro Valley Veterans Memorial - Honoring United States Armed Forces Veterans \(cvvm.info\)](https://www.cvvm.info) for more info.

USS JOE ROSENTHAL AND USS JOE MASKS

Not many people know the name Joe Rosenthal, but everyone knows his photo: six silhouettes against a cloudy sky, struggling to raise a flagpole and a 48-star American flag on Mount Suribachi. It was taken on Iwo Jima, February 23, 1945, the fifth day of a five-week battle that cost the US Navy and Marines 7,000 KIAs, and the enemy thousands more.

Rosenthal had volunteered to go ashore with the first waves of Marines on Iwo Jima and four other Pacific islands. He rode the landing craft with the men and spent his days photographing them up front as they made their slow advance. He dodged death several times but his courage put him in position to capture the frontline Marines and their grim job. He was later made an Honorary Marine.

After the war, Rosenthal returned to San Francisco, where

he worked as a newspaper photographer for the rest of his long career. The locals and World War II enthusiasts knew his name, but not the American public, who sought to put the war behind them, and soon forgot about Rosenthal.

The Bay Area Chapter of the USMC Combat Correspondents Association has set out to change that by having the Navy name a ship after the photographer: the *USS Joe Rosenthal*. The small group of veterans and interested civilians has already collected nearly 5,000 signatures on a petition to the Secretary of the Navy, the person in charge of naming new ships. You can help by adding your name to the online petition at www.USSJoe.org.

It is not just the photo that earned Rosenthal this honor, it was the courage he showed alongside the Marines in combat. Not every photographer did that. And Rosenthal's photo saved the country from bankruptcy when his photo earned over \$26 billion for the wartime treasury as the symbol of the 7th War Loan Drive. The photo is now memorialized in the US Marine Corp War Memorial, a 100-ton bronze statue which is located next to Arlington National Cemetery. It has become the symbol of the US Marine Corps and recognized around the world.

The Fellowship of the Lens Educational Foundation was created to provide funding for the ship naming and other opportunities to honor and educate people about Rosenthal. Besides donations, its principal fundraising effort is selling USS Joe protective masks against COVID. Foundation founder Mike Youngblood identified a manufacturer of the highest quality PPE masks available, exceeding the N95 standard. The four-ply masks have comfortable over-the-head straps and adjustable nose pieces for accurate fit. They come in two sizes and nine different artist's designs, all with the [USSJoe.org](https://www.USSJoe.org) message.

The masks are available for a tax deductible donation of \$15 to the Foundation. Go to [USSJoe.org](https://www.USSJoe.org) or to the Foundation website, www.Lensfellows.org, to choose a design and order. First Class postage is included in the price. Send your questions about quantity sales to wmy1946@gmail.com.

NATIONAL AUXILIARY PRESIDENTS VISIT



On March 8th, Benicia VFW Post in District hosted a dinner with the National Auxiliary President Sandi Onstwedder. Sandi was in California for her official visit with Department. Her visit included a trip to Yountville, Napa, Sacramento and historic Benicia. Photo L-R D10 President Helen Steinberg, Dept. CA President Robyn Kuznik, National President Sandi, D10 Commander Mark Steinberg.

BATAAN MEMORIAL DEATH MARCH



WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE

Every year the White Sands Missile Range hosts the Bataan Memorial Death March. This year, the 32nd annual march will take place virtually for the first time.

On April 9, 1942 tens of thousands of American and Filipino Soldiers surrendered to Japanese forces and were forced to march more than 60 miles in the scorching heat through the Philippine jungles. Thousands died and those who survived faced the hardships of prisoner of war camps. The Bataan Memorial Death March is a challenging and grueling march that tests both mental and physical abilities.

On April 17, members of VFW Post 6298 Pleasanton will participate in the Bataan Memorial Death March Marathon by walking a 26.2 mile course that they have set up in the Tri-Valley area.

IN MEMORIAM

- * David Tejada—Post 8750 (Daly City) December 22, 1922—March 6, 2021. Philippine Scouts, Bataan Death March survivor.
- * Bob Alexander—Post 1525 (Concord). May 10, 1954 - Feb 16, 2021. US Army, Desert Storm.
- * Major General Dan Helix—Post 1525 (Concord). August 24, 1929 - March 9, 2021. Past Mayor of Concord. US Army 41 years of active and reserve service. Korea and Vietnam.
- * John Brennan—Post 8063 (Lafayette). Aug 12, 1926- December 2020. US Army WWII.

Please continue to send notifications of deceased members to D10 Chaplains Jim Uhlik (VFW) or Dara Wong (Auxiliary).

UPCOMING/IMPORTANT DATES

21 March—Rosie the Riveter Day
25 March—National Medal of Honor Day
29 March—National Vietnam War Veterans Day
30 March—Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day
31 March—Deadline for Patriotic Art submissions
5 April—Gold Star Wives Day
14 April—Air Force Reserve Birthday
23 April—Army Reserve Birthday
17 April—Commissioning of the USS Oakland
18 April—District 10 Post and Auxiliary meeting (official

visit) at Concord Veterans Hall (COVID restrictions willing).

10-13 September—Stand Down on the Delta

FOR THE NEXT ISSUE.....PLEASE SEND IN

- Any items of interest. Things you have done or are planning to do
- Questions for D10 officers

UNTIL NEXT TIME.....STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY

A friendly reminder to reach out to any members who may need help to schedule appointments for vaccines.

USEFUL LINKS

VFW Websites: [The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. - VFW](#) (national) or [vfwca.org](#) (Dept. of California)

Auxiliary websites: [vfwauxiliary.org](#) (national) or [vfwauxca.org](#) (Department of California)

Commander Mark Steinberg or President Helen Steinberg e-mail: coachsteiny@msn.com

Adjutant Bill Lew e-mail ca.vfw.dist.10@gmail.com

Facebook Page: [\(1\) Veterans of Foreign Wars District 10 Department of California | Facebook](#)